

## COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

**Updated: November 2, 2021; November 23, 2021**

**Intent:** COVID-19 is a deadly disease that has caused an unprecedented global pandemic in modern times, including here in Canada. While diseases can make anyone sick, some individuals are at elevated risk of getting an infection and developing severe complications due to their age, health, social and economic circumstances.

When the pandemic began in early 2020, it was not anticipated that the virus would continue to cause mass infections, mortality and morbidity over a year later. Instead of fading away like a seasonal flu, COVID-19 has mutated to become more infectious. It is no longer considered a transitory situation.

The city of Ottawa requires that all staff, volunteers and contractors entering city-owned facilities must be vaccinated.

Considering these realities and our essential role in supporting our community, MPCC must endeavour to do no harm to the children in our care, to our work colleagues and to our fellow community members.

### Policies and Procedures

1. Vaccination against COVID-19 is **mandatory** for all employees, volunteers, and contractors of MPCC.
2. Vaccination against COVID-19 is mandatory for all eligible program participants, except those participants in 'essential services'. The MPCC designates licensed childcare as an essential service.
  - a. When Health Canada approves a new cohort as eligible for Covid vaccination, the MPCC will allow a practicable length of time for those in the cohort to be vaccinated before they are subject to this policy. In the interim, other Covid-prevention methods shall be implemented.
3. Proof of full vaccination is required. "Fully vaccinated" means a person has been immunized with a vaccine that has been approved by Health Canada, including receiving all doses that are recommended to provide maximum immunity to COVID-19 infection plus fourteen (14) days wait time following the final vaccination. In addition, employees are required to ensure their immunization is kept current with any required booster shots approved by Health Canada.
4. The vaccination status will be recorded and treated as personal information, securely stored and accessible only to management. This information will be used and/or disclosed only for the purposes of improving workplace health and safety, when required by law and when MPCC participates in any legal action. Otherwise, personal vaccination status will not be used or disclosed without consent.
5. Current employees of MPCC must take steps to prove their vaccination status to management. Systems for demonstrating proof of vaccination differ from province to province and may change over time. Currently, employees who are Ontario residents must provide management with a view of their vaccination receipt issued by the Ministry of Health. Employees who are residents of Québec must provide a view of the Québec equivalent.
6. Offers of employment to candidates for positions at MPCC are conditional on the candidate providing proof of full vaccination, as outlined in this policy.

7. Requests to be exempt from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Generally, they will be granted only to employees who face extraordinary health challenges and for whom all of the available COVID-19 vaccinations are contraindicated. Unequivocal medical information from the requesting employee's treating physician will be required to support an accommodation request.
8. MPCC respects and upholds employee rights provided by the *Human Rights Code*. MPCC will give due consideration to all reasons cited for an exemption to this policy. For clarity, the interpretation of this policy and all requests for accommodation will be carried out in accordance with the *Code*.
9. If MPCC determines that an exemption to this policy is warranted, certain conditions may be imposed on the employee/candidate by which other employees are not bound. Such conditions may be necessary to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission created by the accommodation measure. Some conditions may be imposed by governmental authorities, like Public Health.
10. An employee/candidate who wishes to obtain an exemption to this policy should make the accommodation request in writing directly to the Executive Director. The request must state the specific reason the employee/candidate seeks an exemption, and any medical proof must be attached.
11. Any questions about this policy can be directed to management.
12. MPCC strongly recommends that employees with hesitations about COVID-19 vaccinations consult the information provided by Health Canada and Public Health Ontario.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

1. Assessing the need for a vaccination policy.
  - a. Under Occupational Health and Safety, an employer has a duty to protect the health and safety of its employees; Covid-19 is circulating in the greater community and has resulted in a world-wide pandemic; Covid-19 virus is spread from person to person through the air
    - i. MPCC employees cannot work from home as their duties are to engage with program participants
    - ii. Many program participants are ineligible for vaccination (ie children under 12 ys)
    - iii. Persons with Covid-19 may be asymptomatic yet capable of infecting others
    - iv. MPCC employees work in indoor spaces shared with others
  - b. Covid-19 vaccines have been approved by Health Canada and recognized as effective tools in preventing illness
  - c. Vaccines are less intrusive than other prevention measures
    - i. Vaccines are considered the best resource for prevention
    - ii. Masks, eye protection and other PPE can be uncomfortable especially in extreme weather conditions
    - iii. Distancing is not always possible
      1. When dealing with young children
      2. Indoor space is limited
2. Implementation of the vaccination policy
  - a. Accommodations, when requested, will be considered on a case-by-case basis
    - i. Safety of employees trumps privacy
  - b. Safeguards around personal health information
    - i. Child care employees are required to provide evidence of vaccination and this has not been identified as a privacy risk
    - ii. Documents will be reviewed by supervisor and so noted in the personnel file
    - iii. Original documents will not be retained by MPCC, unless so required by legislation.
  - c. Policy review
    - i. Regular policy review as community conditions surrounding Covid spread change
    - ii. Regular policy review based on guidance from federal, provincial or local health units
  - d. Communication
    - i. Policy will be communicated with staff via email, Zoom meeting, newsletter, and LearnWorld module
  - e. Consequences of non-compliance
    - i. Will be consistently applied
    - ii. May place requirements on non-vaccinated employee which are different from vaccinated employees
  - f. Enforcement
    - i. Supervisors will be responsible for proof of vaccination records, compliance according to deadlines
    - ii. Supervisors will report non-compliance to Executive Director

